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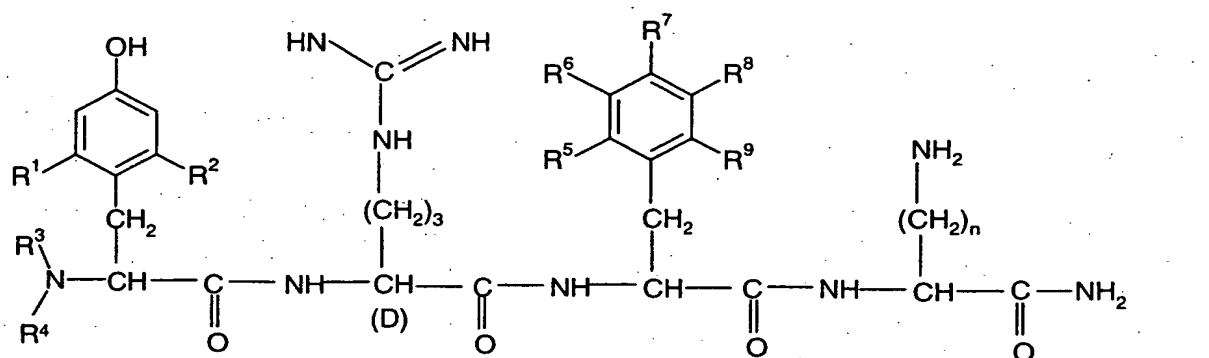
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Claims

1. A compound of the formula I



wherein

R^1 is selected from:

- (i) linear or branched C_1 - C_6 alkyl;
- (ii) C_1 - C_6 alkoxy;

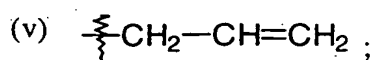
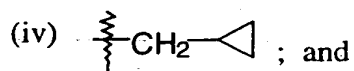
R^2 is selected from

- (i) hydrogen;
- (ii) linear or branched C_1 - C_6 alkyl;
- (iii) C_1 - C_6 alkoxy;

R^3 and R^4 is each and independently selected from

- (i) hydrogen;
- (ii) linear or branched C_1 - C_6 alkyl;

- (iii) $(CH_2)_m$ wherein $m = 1-3$;



R^5 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 is each and independently selected from

- 5 (i) hydrogen;
(ii) halogen, where "halogen" encompasses chloro, fluoro, bromo and iodo; and
(iii) linear or branched C_1 - C_6 alkyl; and

n is an integer of from 1 to 5;

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as well as pharmaceutically and pharmacologically acceptable salts thereof.

2. A compound of formula I according to claim 1, wherein

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R^1 is a linear C_1 - C_6 alkyl;

R^2 is a linear C_1 - C_6 alkyl or hydrogen;

R^3 and R^4 is each and independently selected from a straight C_1 - C_6 alkyl or hydrogen;

20 R^5 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 is each and independently selected from

- (i) hydrogen;
(ii) halogen, where "halogen" encompasses chloro, fluoro, bromo and iodo;
(iii) linear or branched C_1 - C_6 alkyl; and

25 n is an integer of from 1 to 5.

3. A compound according to claim 1, wherein

R^1 is CH_3 ;

5 R^2 is hydrogen or CH_3 ;

R^3 and R^4 are both hydrogen; and

R^5 , R^6 , R^7 , R^8 and R^9 are all hydrogen; and

n is 4.

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4. A compound according to claim 1, which compound is selected from anyone of

H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe-Lys- NH_2 ;

15 H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe-Orn- NH_2 ;

H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe- A_2bu - NH_2 ;

H-Mmt-D-Arg-Phe-Lys- NH_2 ;

H-Dmt-D-Arg-Phe(p-F)-Lys- NH_2 ; and

Dmt(NMe)-D-Arg-Phe-Lys- NH_2 .

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5. A compound according to any one of the previous claims, in form of its hydrochloride salt, acetate salt or trifluoroacetate salt.

6. A compound according to any of claims 1-5 for use in therapy.

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7. A compound according to claim 6, wherein the therapy is pain management.

8. A compound according to claim 7, wherein the pain is labor pain.

9. Use of a compound according to formula I of claim 1, for the manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of pain.
10. Use according to claim 9, wherein the pain is labor pain.
11. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of the formula I according to claim 1 as an active ingredient, in admixture with one or more pharmacologically and pharmaceutically acceptable carriers.
12. A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 11, suitable for administration intrathecally, epidurally, intramuscularly, and intravenously.
13. A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12, wherein the intravenous administration is by infusion.
14. A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula I according to claim 1 by means of solid-phase synthesis, wherein the coupling step in which a protected amino acid is added to the growing peptide chain is performed in an inert solvent using a coupling reagent.
15. A method for the treatment of a subject suffering from pain, whereby an effective amount of a compound of the formula I of claim 1, is administered to a patient in need of pain relief.
16. A method for treatment according to claim 15, wherein the pain is labor pain.